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ABSTRACT

A project was undertaken to research and acquire the instructional sources needed for a course in ethics for community college associate degree nursing students and to develop such a course. Addressed in the individual units of the course were the following topics: bioethics and ethical decision making, basic ethical concepts and principles, professional nursing and moral responsibility, ethical concepts applicable to health care settings, application of an ethical decision-making model, and legal perspectives on ethics in nursing practice. The curriculum guide developed for the course in ethics in nursing practice is included in this project report. The following components are contained in the guide: a course description; information concerning course objectives, grading procedures, and prerequisites; a series of unit outlines that include cross-referenced lists of objectives, subobjectives, and suggested learning experiences; a list of ethical problems and issues organized according to subject area; guidelines for case study and analysis; case study questions and teaching hints; a list of local human resources; and a list of recommended films and teaching aids. A four-page bibliography and a five-item list of other relevant materials are appended. (MN)

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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A COURSE IN ETHICS IN
NURSING PRACTICE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATE
DEGREE NURSING STUDENTS

FINAL REPORT

Project No. 84-ASA(149)NB

Research Development Project
Conducted Under Public Law 94-482

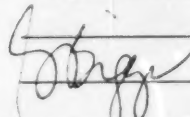
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RESEARCH COORDINATING UNIT

Washington State Commission for Vocational Education

FINAL REPORT

Project No. 84-ASA(149)NB

Research and Development for a Course in Ethics in
Nursing Practice for Community College Associate
Degree Nursing Students

Research Project in Vocational Education
Conducted Under
Public Law 94-482

The project reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the Research Coordinating Unit of the Washington State Commission for Vocational Education. Contractors undertaking such projects under the Commission for Vocational Education sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgement in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Commission for Vocational Education position or policy.

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December 14, 1984

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SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NURSING 225 - ETHICS IN NURSING PRACTICE
HUMANITIES 225

(3 credits)

Course Description:

This is a course for first and second year nursing students, for registered nurses, and for licensed practical nurses. The purpose of the course is to enhance the practice of nursing by developing ethical reasoning ability in nursing students and practicing nurses. The goals of the course are to: identify and describe moral problems and issues, analyze ethical dilemmas, relate ethical principles to ethical dilemmas, and develop strategies for solving specific ethical dilemmas.

12/84

MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:

UNIT I: Introduction to Bioethics and ethical decision making

- A. Understand what the study of ethics involves.
- B. Understand bioethics and ethical decision making.
- C. Understand ethical dilemmas in relation to nursing.

UNIT II: Basic ethical concepts and principles

- A. Understand basic ethical concepts.
- B. Understand basic ethical principles.

UNIT III: Professional Nursing Role and Moral Responsibility

- A. Understand nursing role in relation to ethical concepts and principles.
- B. Understand the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses.

UNIT IV: Ethical concepts applicable to health care settings.

- A. Understand common ethical problems in health care settings.
- B. Understand potential future ethical problems in health care settings.

UNIT V: Application of an ethical decision making model

- A. Understand the steps of applying an ethical decision making model.
- B. Demonstrate ability to analyze cases involving ethical problems.

UNIT VI: Legal perspectives

- A. Understand characteristics of informed consent.
- B. Understand concepts of patient rights in relation to selected legal cases.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, given instruction, independent study and clinical case studies, the student will be able to:

1. Describe your philosophy of life as it relates to ethical issues.
2. Identify models for ethical decision making in nursing.
3. Analyze an ethical decision making model.
4. Understand fundamental ethical principles that guide decision making in health care.
5. Analyze the relationship of ethical decision making to nursing theory.
6. Analyze the code of nursing ethics as a framework for ethical decision making.
7. Identify the roles of patient, family, nurse, and other professionals in ethical decision making.
8. Identify ethical dilemmas that are pertinent to nursing.
9. Compare ethical and legal aspects of dilemmas in nursing.
10. Analyze your position in an ethical conflict situation.
11. Describe the nurse's role in helping the patient make personal decisions about health problems.
12. Apply ethical decision making models to resolve an ethical dilemma in which a nurse is involved.
13. Communicate decisions reached in analyzing an ethical dilemma.
14. Understand legal perspectives on ethical situation.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Davis, A.J. and Aroskar, M.A. Ethical Dilemmas and Nursing Practice (2nd ed.). Norwalk, Conn.: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1983.

EVALUATION METHODS AND PROCESSES MAY INCLUDE:

Written exams
Homework
Case study analysis
Research paper

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Read assigned material
Participate in class discussions
Participate in small group sessions
Write research paper
Analyze case studies

GRADING SYSTEM:

A = 94-100% of possible points

B = 86-93% of possible points

C = 75-85% of possible points

D = 65-74% of possible points

F = 64% and below

PRE-REQUISITES:

Current enrollment as a first or second year nursing student or registered nurse or licensed practical nurse status.

OBJECTIVES	CONTENT (Sub-Objectives)	LEARNING EXPERIENCES
UNIT I: INTRODUCTION TO BIOETHICS AND ETHICAL DECISION MAKING		
A. Understand what the study of ethics involves.	1. Define ethics.	Lecture-discussion
	2. Relate ethics to the study of philosophy.	Read: Davis and Aroskar: Chapters 1 and 2
	3. Define nursing ethics.	
	4. Identify the philosophical basis of nursing ethics.	
	5. Understand the difference between law and ethics.	
B. Understand bioethics and ethical decision making.	1. Relate bioethics to ethics and philosophy.	Read: Davis and Aroskar: Chapter 3.
	2. Understand the basics of major ethical theories: deontological theory and teleological theory.	
	3. Differentiate between moral dilemmas and non-moral dilemmas.	
	4. Compare bioethical decision making models.	
C. Understand ethical dilemmas in relation to nursing.	1. Identify components of a moral situation in nursing practice.	Read: Davis and Aroskar: Chapter 4.
	2. Identify institutional factors that affect ethical practice in nursing.	View: "Who Should Survive"
	3. Relate socialization factors on the social and professional levels that affect moral reasoning of nurses.	

UNIT II: BASIC ETHICAL CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

A. Understand basic ethical concepts.

1. Explain the concepts of: rights, rights of clients, duty, obligation, and responsibilities of nurses.
2. Relate these concepts to ethical decision making.

Read: Davis and Aroskar:
Chapters 3 and 4.

B. Understand basic ethical principles.

1. Understand the principles of: beneficence, justice, autonomy, and paternalism.
2. Compare the principles involved in a hypothetical situation.

Read: Davis and Aroskar:
pp. 41-46.

UNIT III: PROFESSIONAL NURSING ROLE AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

A. Understand the nursing role in relation to ethical concepts and principles.

1. Explain how information control relates to autonomy of the client.

Read: Davis and Aroskar: Chapters 5 and 6.

2. Explain how honesty relates to the professional-client relationship.

View: "Ethical Issues in Nursing"

3. Explain the nursing role in relation to ethical decision making.

4. Examine rights and responsibilities of the nurse-patient relationship.

B. Understand the ANA Code for Nurses.

1. Identify the major points in the ANA Code for nurses.

Read: Davis and Aroskar: pp. 12-13.

2. Relate the Code's interpretive statements to ethical decision making.

OBJECTIVES	CONTENT (Sub-Objectives)	LEARNING EXPERIENCES
UNIT IV: ETHICAL CONCEPTS APPLICABLE TO HEALTH CARE SETTINGS		
A. Understand common ethical problems in health care settings.	1. Examine the topics of informed consent, truth telling, and confidentiality. 2. Examine the concept of the obligation to treat.	Read: Davis and Aroskar: Chapter 13. View: "Whose Life Is It Anyway"
B. Understand potential future ethical problems in health care settings.	1. Explore the issue of scarcity in relation to health care resources. 2. Examine the issue of allocation of health care resources.	View: "Code Gray"

UNIT V: APPLICATION OF AN ETHICAL DECISION MAKING MODEL

A. Understand the steps of applying an ethical decision making model.

1. Describe the ethical dilemma or problem.
2. Describe the decision making steps.
 - a. List all the action options
 - b. Rule out all options not acceptable on an a priori basis.
 - c. Formulate an ethical statement for the action that appears most desirable.
3. Describe the universalizability of the action.
4. Describe the consequences of the action.
5. Compare each consequence with personal values to determine consistency or inconsistency.

Read: Davis and Aroskar:
Chapter 13

View: "Please Let Me Die"

B. Demonstrate ability to analyze cases involving ethical problems.

1. Given selected cases, determine:
 - a. What is going on in the case
 - b. By what criteria should decisions be made
 - c. Who should make the decisions in the case
 - d. For whose benefit is the decision made
 - e. How should the nursing professional act

UNIT VI: LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

A. Understand characteristics of informed consent.

1. Compare voluntary, competent, and informed consent.
2. Examine practices that relate to consent.

Read: Davis and Aroskar:
Chapters 7 and 10

B. Understand concept of patient rights in relation to selected legal cases.

1. Examine the concept of substituted judgment.
2. Examine the legal issues in deciding to forego life sustaining treatment.

Read: Davis and Aroskar:
Chapters 8,9,12&13.

Examine the concept of law as a resource in helping with ethical issues.

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ETHICAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES BY SUBJECT AREA

Maternal-Child

- Abortion
- Fetal research
- Artificial insemination
- In vitro fertilization
- Population control
- Responsible parenthood
- Prenatal diagnosis of genetic disorders
- Genetic counseling, genetics, and genetic engineering

Pediatrics

- Allowing babies to die
- Proxy consent
- Research and experimentation on children
- Child abuse
- Euthanasia
- Informed consent

Medical-Surgical

- Truth-telling
- Patients' right to know
- Allocation of scarce resources
- Transplantation
- Aging - loss of dignity
- Definition of death
- Living will
- Prolonging life
- Euthanasia

Community/Public Health

- Preventive life styles and health care
- Right to health care
- Inadequate health care
- Deinstitutionalization
- Social justice

Professional Role

- Confidentiality
- Codes of ethics
- Patients' Bill of Rights
- Identification of personal values
- Physician-nurse relationship
- Conflicts in roles/relationships
- Working in a bureaucratic system
- Unions
- Patient advocacy
- Nurse practice acts
- Peer review
- Professional discipline of members
- Nursing research
- Models of ethical decision-making

Psychiatric-Mental Health

- Labeling
- Informed consent
- Research-experimentation
- Mental retardation
- Behavior control
- Involuntary hospitalization
- Psychosurgery
- Drug therapy
- Paternalism
- Suicide

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GUIDELINES FOR CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS

Definition: A case study is a method of learning. It provides a systematic and organized approach to solving complex problems. It is a way of involving people in decision-making. Participants in a case study engage in an objective critical analysis of a case involving an ethical dilemma. Case analysis helps students recognize that the role of the nurse is distinct from that of other health care professionals.

Purpose: To enable students to recognize ethical problems.
To promote the exercise of students' critical analysis upon ethical problems.
To develop students' confidence in their abilities to act on the analysis of ethical problems.

Value of case study approach: The case study will assist the student to make an independent assessment of what is ethical and what is not. The case study presents an ethical dilemma within the context of the real, complex institutional setting where the interests of the patient may not be the primary consideration in making a decision.

Questions which may be asked in studying a case:

1. What is going on in the case?
2. By what criteria should decisions be made?
3. Who should decide?
4. For whose benefit is the decision made?
5. How should professionals decide and act?

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CASE STUDY QUESTIONS/TEACHING HINTS

1. What is going on in the case?

- must distinguish scientific facts from questions of values and morals.
- morally relevant facts may not be included in a nurse's usual assessment.
- a nurse's value system needs to be identified.

2. By what criteria should decisions be made?

- professional codes, religious and philosophical works are sources of criteria:

i.e. - ANA code.

- International code of nursing ethics.
- moral codes of various religious groups.
- religion or philosophy of life can be useful in decision-making
- philosophical schools/reasoning
 - Utilitarian (greatest good for the greatest number)
 - Theory of honesty and promise-keeping (Immanuel Kant)
- nurse's philosophy of nursing

3. Who should decide?

- Role conflicts may cause dilemmas.
- Must clarify roles/relationships of those involved in a situation.
- Normally, patients are the key decision-makers unless they are unable to act for themselves.
- Collaboration and collegial relationships lead to the best decisions.

4. For whose benefit is the decision made?

- Nurse may have conflicting loyalties to the patient, family, physician, other health team members, and the institution.
- Which takes priority?
- Definition of nursing/nursing theory may be a guide.

5. How should professionals decide and act?

- Alternative decisions should be considered.
- Should patient be told truth gradually or sparingly?
- Informed consent.

LOCAL HUMAN RESOURCES FOR ETHIC'S PROBLEMS

Sr. Chauncey Boyle--St. Peter Hospital, Olympia

Sr. Diana Bader--Consultant in Ethics and Values at St. Joseph Hospital, Tacoma and
St. Helen Hospital, Chehalis

Paul Menzel--Dept. of Philosophy-Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma

FILMS/TEACHING AIDS

"Who Should Survive?" (Downs Syndrome Baby)

"Code Gray" (High-Tech, Critical Care)

"Whose Life Is It Anyway?": BBC film

"Please Let ME Die": BBC film

"Ethical Issues in Nursing" (3 cases involving ethical dilemmas)

Fanlight Productions
47 Halifax Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 524-0980

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Major Objectives

The major objectives for the project were: Research and acquire instructional sources needed for a course in ethics for community college associate degree nursing students and Develop a course in Ethics in Nursing Practice for the students.

Summary of Activities

In this project I did a review of the pertinent literature on the subject of ethics. I developed course objectives, learning experiences, and a bibliography. I also determined what books to buy to enhance the local library. I found a number of available audio-visual materials for use during instruction of the class. I found that case studies available in the nursing textbooks and resource books could be used for analysis in class. I prepared a course outline for use in actually teaching the course.

Summary of Results; Accomplishments

I read a number of articles and books while setting up this course. I discussed the need for the class with a variety of people and received a good amount of encouragement as to the need for such a class. I have prepared a specific course syllabus and reading list to use in the actual operation of the class. I have requested that the class carry a dual title or label so that students could choose to take the course either for Nursing credit or for Humanities credit.

Major Conclusions and Recommendations

The course is ready to be taught as soon as it is approved by the college's instructional council. From all the literature available to the public and to nursing personnel, it is obvious that the timing is right to offer this class. With animal heart transplants and artificial heart replacements happening, many ethical questions are being raised. I expect that the public will be more and more interested in ethical issues. I recommend that the course be offered and that continued support be given to vocational educators to continue work in this area.

BODY OF REPORT

Problem Area

Scientific and technological practices of this century have affected many aspects of human life. Some scientific and technologic events have created serious moral problems in the biomedical field. The technologies for preventing unwanted births and for prolonging life by using extraordinary measures are readily available. The dual issues of access to health care and the right to refuse health care are becoming important public matters.

Nursing and nursing education are affected by these problems and issues. Nursing includes technical as well as moral components. Many clinical nursing practice problems are based on conflicts having to do with communication among the patients, families, and health care providers and with decisions on whether to use certain treatments or procedures. Technological or scientific answers alone do not provide the knowledge needed for communication and decision-making when health care problems occur. A course of study in ethics is becoming more apparent as a requirement for dealing with these pervasive problems.

The literature describes the need for ethics education in nursing and indicates that moral reasoning is the basis of ethical behavior. Ketefian (1981a) studied registered nurses who were graduates of associate degree or baccalaureate nursing programs. Ketefian reported that the higher the nurses's critical thinking, the higher their moral reasoning was likely to be. Nurses who had professional (baccalaureate) education had more advanced levels of moral reasoning than those who had received technical (associate degree) nursing preparation. In another study, Ketefian (1981b) found that the process of moral reasoning is related to moral behavior. Ketefian upheld two hypotheses: 1) That there is a positive relationship between moral reasoning and knowledge and valuation of ideal moral behavior in nursing dilemmas; and 2) That there is a positive relationship between moral reasoning and nurses' perceptions of realistic moral behavior in nursing dilemmas.

From the literature, it is evident that nursing education must address the moral reasoning-ethical behavior problem. Fromer (1982) wrote that although nurses may recognize ethical dilemmas, they often lack preparation to solve the dilemmas using ethical principles. Aroskar (1982) noted that frequently nurses are unaware that they are involved in situations requiring consideration of ethical elements. Berkowitz (1982) wrote that it is important to understand that the moral reasoning of nurses and nursing students is a developmental phenomenon. According to Berkowitz, the goal of a nursing ethics education curriculum should be to nurture the development of higher forms of moral reasoning in nursing students. Gilbert (1982) reiterated the need for ethics content in nursing curricula. Benoliel (1983) stated that faculty need to create educational environments that support the growth of social and ethical understanding in nursing students.

Objectives and Sub-Objectives

The overall objective of the project was to research and develop a course in nursing ethics for community college associate degree nursing students.

The sub-objectives included: review the related literature, develop a bibliography of ethics references for nursing, request media and books for purchase, identify human resources, identify course objectives for a course in Ethics in Nursing Practice, develop curriculum content, identify learning experiences, determine evaluation methods, prepare a course outline for Instructional Council, develop lesson plans, develop case studies, and develop evaluation tools.

Description of the general project design and procedure

The project design and procedure was to research and develop a course in Nursing Ethics for use in the community college setting. That has been accomplished. The course is awaiting approval from the college's instructional council.

Results and accomplishments

A course entitled Ethics in Nursing Practice has been developed. The course syllabus is included as a part of this final report. As soon as the course is approved by the instructional council, a request will be made to place the course in the time schedule.

Evaluation

The course appears to be appropriate to the needs of current and former nursing students. After teaching the course, some revisions, additions, and deletions may need to be made. The course outline will be updated periodically in order to deal with current ethical issues.

Conclusions, implications, and recommendations for the future

There appears to be a need for this course. There certainly are local and national issues that are relevant to nurses and to the public. In the future, there may be a need for more work and curriculum development in this area. I would recommend that monies be available for further exploration and development in the area of ethics and humanities as they are applicable to vocational education.

Project dissemination activities

The course will be publicized in the college catalog and time schedule. The instructor will disseminate information on the course by verbal and written communication with nurses and nursing students.

APPENDIX A SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NURSING 225
Articles

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SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Nursing 225

Books and Other Publications

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APPENDIX B:

SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Other Materials to Acquire

American Nurses' Association. Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, Kansas City, MO.: ANA, 1976.

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